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JANUARY 3, 1939

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IN SENATE  
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By a Committee of the Assembly

He being Dead yet Speaks

LONDON  
Printed in the Year 1698

H. S. E.

Thomas Firmin, Londinensis,

Vir Integerrimus, consummatissimus

Cui summa in dictis fides

In moribus sva vitas

In quotidiana consuetudine facilitas fuit.

Quem natura industrium,

Cura instructum,

Privata vita fecit illustrem.

Mediocri, at honesto loco natus,

Erecto fretus animo,

Umbratilis desideria impatiens,

Ad publica munera se totum direxit.

Amicos, pauperes, imo omnes

Ea fide, charitate, benevolentia amplexus est,

Ut universi orbis Civis,

Orphanorum Pater

HT Viduarum maritus,

Merito audit.

Si, quod in pauperes erogatur, Deo creditur,

Maximum faeneratorem jure dixeris.

Male feriatos istos Systematum fabros,

Queis perplexa cavi Spirant Mysteria folles,

Sprevit, irrisit,

Men

Mendacium neque decebat, neque pati poterat  
Christiane philosophiae adminiculis,  
Quam puro, sincero, & avito Dei cultu

Rite condit,

Ad vitam bene agendam,

Non ad ostentationem, usus est.

Amicitias coluit celebres & magnas,

Clar. *Tillotson* *ms* *verse* *in* charissimus.

Postquam in Dei Opt. Max. cultum,

In civium publicos usus.

In pauperum levamen multa molirus esset,

● Plura jam moliretur,

Candidissimam efflavit animam. XIII Kal. Jan.

Ann. Dom. MDCXCVII.

Abi Viator, & si potis es, imitare.

THE



**GRATEFUL SAMARITAN**

**A Short and Impartial ACCOUNT of that  
most Eminent, and Publick-Spirited Citizen,  
Mr. THOMAS FIRMIN.**

*As a Letter to a Person of Quality.*

**I** Have in Obedience to your Commands, endeavoured to give the World some short Account of our most excellent Friend lately Deceased, and to deal ingenuously with you, tho' your Commands have been always Sacred to me, I never in all my Life Obey'd you with greater Alacrity. To do Justice to the Dead, but especially those, who when living were Ornaments of their Country, is an Office of Gratitude, which is Authorized by the practice of all Times and Nations. And indeed 'tis highly reasonable, that the Memories of those Persons, that obliged not only their own, but succeeding Generations, should be Transmitted to Posterity for ever: the present Age is not able to pay the Debt, 'tis fit that Posterity that shares the Benefit of their Piety and Labours, should be charged with part of it, and join in a common acknowledgement to the common Benefactors.

I don't here pretend to enter into a Detail of all the Particulars of his Life, but only to Recount some passages of it that may be useful to the present, and serviceable to future Ages. Those Biographers that affect to clog their Narration with abundance of frivolous, idle, impertinent Circumstances, as they do no honour to the Deceased so they seem to have but a mean Opinion of their Reader. Wile they take such unnecessary pains to Amuse, instead of Instructing him. In the Delineation of a Life, as well as in a Picture, several things ought to be thrown into the Shade, and should not be seen by a full Light, for this reason I shall only consider him in his General Character, leaving other

Minor Circumstances to be Recounted by those that have either more Leisure upon their Hands, or a greater Inclination for that way of Writing, and this I shall endeavour to perform in a plain Style, and the same simplicity with which he Lived.

Mr. *Thomas Firmin* of *London*, Gardier, and Mercer, was one of the most Signal Examples of Charity, Candour, Integrity, Justice, and of all other Christian, and Moral Virtues as this, or perhaps any other Age of the World ever produced. He was Devout without Bigotry, Ill-nature, or Affectation; he was Charitable, without Ostentation, or Design; he considered himself as a Citizen of the whole Universe, and took a singular Delight in Relieving the Unfortunate, and Oppressed. Tho he was a free from Infirmitie, as most Men, yet he had an unconquerable Aversion to that Spirit of Calumny, which is now so predominant, and as it was with much difficulty that he was induced to believe any ill Reports of his Neighbour; so he never Propagated them upon the highest Provocation. He adorn'd a Private Life with the Assiduity, and Vigilance of a Publick Minister, and was ever pursuing what he conceiv'd to be for the General Interest. If, as the Holy Wife assures us, *He that gives to the Poor lends to the Lord*, he may justly be said to be one of the greatest Benefactors in the World; (a name which he abominated,) for he had them always in his Thoughts, his Wishes, and his Endeavours. He supported their wants not only by his private Munificence, which was extraordinary for one of his Rank; but by recommending their Condition with the greatest Fervour to all his Friends. I know it has been impotently objected against him by some Envious Persons, That he was a Gainer by the Charities, which he Collected for the Needy. You, and I, and all that had the happiness to be Acquainted with him, know well enough, that this Reproach is illgrounded.

The Working House in *Little Britain*, (of which, more hereafter) that was begun and carried on chiefly at his Expence, and that of his worthy Friends, who joyn'd with him in so excellent a Design, was so far from turning to any Advantage, that it proved a continual Charge to him; however, he who never considered his own private loss when it came in competition with a Publick Benefit, still kept it on to his Dying Day. But this Calumny may be the better supported, since he shared it with so excellent a Person as his Grace, the present Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, who, when he was only private Pastor of a Parish Church, Erected two Free-Schools, and a Noble Library, and yet has been Traduced by some Malicious Tongues, as if he had kept the greatest part of those Liberalities, of which he was the Collector, to his own private Uses.

As I said before, we that are his Friends may the better support this Injury done to him; since it affects so great a Prelate in common with himself. But what station of Life, and Qualities of Mind, can preserve a Man from the assaults, and wounds of Envy, which so disinterested a Virtue, as Charity, cannot place him above the reach of Slander?

In his private Dealings as a Trades-man, no Man could be more Religiously Exact, and tender then he was; he gave particular charge to his Servants, that when ever there happened a difference in the Accounts between him, and any of his Correspondents, that they should always adjudge it in favour of the latter. He so cautiously avoided the very suspicion of Injustice, that he rather chose to wrong himself, than to make his Neighbour a sufferer. He imagined that his Servants in the hurry of Business might be apt to commit some mistakes through Inadvertency, or Forgetfulness; but it could never enter into his Thoughts, that any one should think it worth their while to injure him; taking a Standard of the Integrity of all Mankind, from that which he so nicely followed himself.

He had observed with that rancour, and bitterness of Spirit, People of different Parties in his time had all along labour'd to blacken one another, and if the Trade of Calumniating, he said, could be so successfully, and generally carried on in so enlightened an Age as this is, and in so small a Spot of Ground as *England*, when by the Invention of Printing it is so easy a thing to find out, and discover the Truth: He thought a Man in common Discretion, should not be too forward to pass a rigid Censure upon several of those Persons, who in the Writings of *Epiphanius*, and other Ancient Authors, are Branded for Hereticks, and loaded with such execrable, and horrid Crimes; that Humane Nature one would hope could never be capable of. What helped to confirm him in this Opinion, is a famous Passage in *Gregory* the Historian, who in a Letter ingeniously tells the Reader, That it was a common Custom with the Bishops to Accuse those Persons who were turned out of their places, to pronounce them to be Impious and the like, without giving themselves the trouble to justify the particulars of that Impiety, they charged them with. Thus we have a frank Confession of what was commonly Practis'd in those Ages of the Church, and whoever doubts whether the same Methods were not carried on afterwards, let him but read what a monstrous Account the *Popish* Writers have given of *Wicliffe*, and the *Lollards*, as they call'd them; how maliciously the Monks have blacken'd those Persons that were not in their Interests, what abominable Stories the Jesuits have reported of *Luther*, and

Calvin; let him, I say, but turn over *Sanders's History of the Reformation*, the *Catalogues of Bala*, and *Pitt's Fox's Martyrs*, and to come down to our own times, *White's Centuries of Scandalous Divines*, *Edward's Gangrene*, the several *Mercuries* in the late Civil Wars, the *Quakers' Cantabrigia*, the *Historie of R. Manning*, and *Vorillas*, the *Packets of Advice*, and the *Observations* of the Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence, and the Answer to it, with a Million of other Anonymous Pamphlets, and Secret Histories; and if this don't convince him, I don't know what will.

He was a hearty Assertor of the Liberties of his Native Country, and looked with Indignation, and Contempt on those Christians, who in a strain of Flattery, scarcely to be matched in the servile Neighbourhood of *Tiberius*, and *Dominion*, most humbly Addressed King *Charles*, that he would be graciously pleased to put Chains and Fetters on them; and thus prostituted those Rights and Immunities, which their Ancestors had taken such care to transmit safely to a most unworthy Generation. He thought that the perpetual Hellowing of Passive Obedience, and Non-Resistance, from the Pulpits, did not a little contribute to fix these Slavish Impressions upon People's minds. And so these Doctrines were as certain as any in the New Testament; why should they, as it were in preference to the rest, be everlastingly inculcated to all Congregations? Or where was the Policy, to tell the King, and his Officers, that they might strip the People of all they possess'd in the World, and yet they were all Conscience bound not to lift up a finger against them? What Man of sense that desired to keep his Wife honest, would be always railing in her Ear, 'Proud my Plate, and injure my Bed, as often as thou wilt; for my Husband's gion teaches me to bear all patiently. Princes are naturally ambitious of Power, and don't need Instructors to tell them, that if they please, they may Govern their Subjects Despotically; and therefore quote them Texts of Scripture for it. But he often used to say, As long as Denunciations, and good Preferment, were to be got by Preaching this absurd stuff, so long the Church would stand by it; but that if ever the Court came to put matters home to these Pious five Gentlemen, and pinch the Retailers of this monstrous Hypocrites, they would as certainly leave it in the lurch, as they would a starving Curacy in the Hundreds for a rich Personage in a better Air. The event has confirmed the truth of what he said, for no sooner did *W. James*, and his Priests, begin to pull one of their Tyho-Pig about the Ear, but all the Pulpits from the *Landstreet*, to *Bombick* upon *Tweed*, rung of Persecution, and Tyranny; and since his present Majesty's accession to the Crown, the Laitie has had the satisfaction

on of seeing their Teachers face about, and declare for the quite contrary Doctrine, or at least restrain it; except a few, whom either the real belief of a Principle early received, or the shame of being thought Turn-Coats, or Obstinate, or Interest, and other By-ends, have hindered from taking the Oaths to the Government.

What was remarkable in a Person of his Private Condition, who had not the advantage of a learned Education or of an ample Fortune and Wealth to Support him, he was honoured with the Acquaintance of the most illustrious Men that this Age has produced. This he obtained by the Simplicity of his Manners, the Uniformity of his Life, by his Indemness, naturally solid, and well Determin'd; and his active Genius, that was capable of the greatest Undertakings. Not to mention several worthy Citizens of the most distinguished Rank, he was particularly Esteem'd by the equally Learned, and Pious Dr. *Wilkins*, Bishop of *Chester*, by the Honourable Mr. *Boyle*, the great Restorer of Natural, and Christian Philosophy, by that Eminent Oracle of the Law, Sir *Matthew Hale*, and (what will be the most lasting Elogy to our Friend, that I, or any other Hand can give him,) he was happy in the Friendship of the most Excellent Prelate, that ever fill'd the Archiepiscopal Chair, the Incomparable Dr. *Tillotson*.

Having presumed to mention that great Name, which will be sacred to all Posterity, in so worthless a Paper as this is, I hope Sir, you'll give me leave to make a short Digression: You know, the Arch-Bishop has been Maliciously Represented in some Libels, as a Betrayer of the Church, and an Enemy to the Christian Faith; because, when he was advanced to that Dignity, which he the best deserved of any of his Function, he was pleas'd to suffer a Visit now and then from his old Acquaintance, Mr. *Furmen*. All the Impartial World I believe is furnish'd, that Dr. *Tillotson* was far from being a Socinian. His own Works sufficiently testify it, to the everlasting Infamy of those that laid it to his Charge; and yet an innocent Correspondence with a Person, whose Unhappiness, and not Fault, it was, to Differ from us in some disputed Points, must be improv'd into the blackest Sin imaginable, as if it were impossible to use common Civilities to our Neighbour without being of his Opinion. Even the Church of *Rome*, when by virtue of its Infallibility, has the best Right to Preferre its sons, what Company to keep, has not been able to influence several of its Worthy Members from paying a due deference to conspicuous Merit, tho' they found it lodg'd in an Enemy. Father *Furmen* thought it no Scandal to him to pass his vacante

Hours



Hours in Sir Henry Wootton, or Mr. Bader's Company, tho' they disagreed from him in matters of Religion. Our Country-man, Mr. Hobbes of Malmesbury, who was no Friend to the Papacy, all the World knows, was singularly honoured by Gassendus, and F. Merseus. The Learned Malpighius of Florence, never scrupled to keep a Correspondence with the Gentlemen of our Royal Society, tho' in his Country they pass for Hereticks. Nay, before the late War, the King of France, who cannot be suspected of favouring Protestants, used to give Annual Pensions to Learned Men of all Countries, and Religions, as for instance, to Monsieur Huygens, Spanheim, Gravins, and Isaac Vossius. Conversation must be confined to very narrow bounds indeed, if it be a Sin to have any Commerce with those that don't come up exactly to our Sentiments in every Point. But this spiteful Objection has been chiefly made by two slow, morose Churchmen of our Nation; one of them an abdicated Dean, who has been already chastised for his Insolence by another Hand; the other is the famous Adversary of Dr. St—k, who, the truth on't is, deserves none of the civilest usage, but in a Subject that required the greatest Sobriety of Style he has vented his Envy in a way so boisterous, and unprecedent, (*nam etiam sunt Belli iura*) that if a System of Scurrility were to be compiled, I know not where the Materials are, to be so plentifully found as in his Writings. If the generality of the Divines were of this brutal, and savage Temper, (as Heaven be praised they are not) were a Man to express a steady, incurable, unrelenting Hatred, he could not call it by a proper Term, than that of *Odium Theologicum*, after the same manner as the Pious Provision which both Regular, and Secular take in Popish Countries, not to injure their frail Bodies with bad Liquor, has made the best sort of Wine to be commonly called *Verum Theologicum*; and one might have reason on his side to apply to such Incendiaries the following passage out of the Preface to the fifth Edition of Father Simon's Critical History in French. *Il est si long temps qu'on a remarqué que les Theologiens sans gens sans pitié, & qu'ils ne donnent jamais coup de dents sans emporter la pièce.* I purposely forbear to Translate it into English, because, as to the general the imputation is false.

I may venture to say, That no Age, and perhaps no Nation in the World has produced a Man of a more useful, more Disinterested, and extended Charity, since the Apostolic times. He made it his business, and employed all his Interest (which was very considerable) to relieve the Necessities of the Poor, under which Depopulation, I don't comprehend those sturdy, abandon'd Vagrants, those lazy Counterfeits, and unprofitable Vermin; that to the eternal Scandal



all of our Laws, and Government, are suffered to poller our Streets and Highways, and fill all places with their impudent Clattours. But real Objects of Compassion, such as Orphans, and Widows, and House-keepers, that by unforeseen, and unavoidable Accidents, were reduced to Poverty. He looked upon us to be none of the ablest Politicians in the World, who lying in a County naturally Productive of the best Commodities, having so much waste Ground to imploy idle Hands; and the Sea on every side of us that lies as much neglected, sling up all these advantages that our Situation, and Soil, have conspired to bestow upon us; and tho we pretend to give Laws to all Europe, yet are content to pay an ignominious Tribute of 700000 *l. per Annum*, to a parcel of unthankful insolent Vagabonds at home. He was of Opinion, that if the aforesaid Sum was thrown into a Common Stock, and Working-Houses Erected in all the considerable Market-Towns in the Kingdom, we should in a few Years find our Poor less burthenfom to us than now they are; at least the Republick would derive this benefit from it, that tho the Contributions for them continued in the present State, yet an effectual stop would be put to the reigning Vice of Piffering, and Stealing: Besides that, by this means, he said, we should soon clear our Roads, and Streets of those troublesome People; we should breed a Healthful Generation of able Bodied Men, fit for the Plow, and Sea-service, and disarm our Beggars of the only tolerable Excuse they have for such a Profligate Life, viz: That they are willing to Work, if any one would Imploy them. Therefore to set a leading example to the rest of the Nation, he not only contributed what he thought proper for such a Design out of his own Purse, but engaged as many of his Acquaintance as he could, to Erect a Working-House in *Little Brighthelm*; and tho the Manufactures that were wrought there, fell considerably short of answering the Expence of the Undertakers were yearly at, yet it produced this good effect, that it constantly imployed abundance of Necessitous Persons all the year round, who must otherwise have betaken themselves to a Vicious habit of Life, or else proved burthenfom to the respective Parishes where they lived. I have dwelt the longer upon this Article, because, I am in hopes, that so generous, and so fresh a President, will prevail with our Patriots to cure their Country of this lingering Distemper, that has so long annoy'd it, especially at this Coniuncture, when the Genius of England seems to be animated with a new Spirit, when we have a Victorious Monarch at the Head of the Government who is willing to rectifie all the Abuses, and Disorders of our Constitution.

ion, and to put in Execution whatever his faithful Servant addreſſes him to; when the *Royal Fiſhery*, that will employ ſo many hands, has already made ſuch conſiderable Advances; and laſtly, when upon the Diſbanding of our Land Forces, we ſhall find our ſelves obliged to make ſome ſort of Proviſion for the Soldiers, that they who behaved themſelves ſo gallantly in *Flanders*, may not be neceſſitated for want of Employment, to betake themſelves to indirect courſes to prevent Starving.

As for that other Branch of Chriſtian Charity, which relates to Men, as they unhappily differ from us, in Points of Religion, it thin'd in every action of his Life, and indeed was interwoven with his Nature. He rightly judged, that nothing has given greater Scandal to the Jews, nor ſo ſenſibly wounded our Religion among *Heathens*, and *Mahometans*, nor furniſhed the *Papiſts* with a more Popular Objection? that in ſhort, nothing has been, more effectually made a pretence, even for Atheiſm, and Infidelity, than our unnatural Diviſions, and Animofities. 'Tis indeed certain, that our Controverſies about Religion, as we have awkwardly managed them, have at laſt brought even Religion it ſelf into Diſpute among ſuch, whoſe weaker Judgment have not been able to diſcern the plain, and unqueſtionable way to Heaven in ſo great a Miſt as theſe Bigots have moſt unreaſonably raiſed. What renders the Scene more ſurprizing, thoſe very Perſons, whoſe duty it is to be Meſſengers of Peace, and to recommend it both by their Example, and Preaching, have rather ſounded an Alarm to our contentious Spirits, than a Retreat, or Parly; ſo that by the diſtemper'd heat of theſe indiſcreet Chymiſts, the Life and Spirit of Chriſtianity, I mean, the Practice of it, has been ſo much rarified into airy Notions, and Speculations, that the inward Strength, and Vitals of it have been quite conſum'd, and exhauſted.

A Friend of mine happened to be once in his Company, when a Merchant that had lived ſeveral Years in the *East-Indies*, ask'd him, *What he thought of the Mahometans, and Pagans, who, according to his Computations, Poſſeſſed at leaſt the better half of the Globe.* He made no difficulty to own, that as he ſhould always prefer to be guilty of a well meaning Error, than ruſhly ſubſcribe to a doubtful Truth, that carried great Rigours, and Severities along with it; ſo he hoped, that the Natural Knowledge which all Men have of God, was capable either to procure them Eternal Felicity, or at leaſt to preſerve them from Miſery, if wanting other means to be better Inſtructed, they liv'd up to the plain, and eaſie Dictates of Reaſon: Upon which Head, give me leave, Sir, to add a few Words of my own. 'Tis certain, that

that the Fathers of the Church, before they engaged in the warm Disputes with the *Pelagians*, did not talk of the Celebrated Heroes of *Paganism*, as Men that were Sentenc'd to everlasting Condemnation. *Cassaubon* has proved it ar large, in the first Chap. of his Book against Cardinal *Baronius*, and the famous Monsieur *de La Motte le Vayer*, in his Book concerning the Virtue of the Heathens, has justified by adundance of Passages, that several of the Fathers, and School-Divines, (the latter of which, generally speaking, I were not Men of the greatest Charity,) have Taught, that the Pagans, that lived Virtuous Lives, were not excluded from Salvation. *Zuinglius*, who has been accused for a Man of too much warmth, maintained the same Opinion. Nay, the Jews themselves, who were so jealous formerly, to be thought the only People of God, and had so despicable an Opinion of all the World besides, make no scruple now to own, that a Man may arrive to Happiness by the bare unassisted Religion of Nature, as the Learned, Dr. *Addison*, in his Account of them, has shown.

He always looked upon *Liberty of Conscience* to be the Birth-Right of every Christian, and that every Government was oblig'd in point of Interest, as well as bound by the common Principles of Humanity to indulge it; provided it maintained nothing that was contrary to Good-Manners, and the Peace of the Civil Society. I have been told what pass'd in a Conversation between him, and an eminent Divine of this City, in the Year, 1683; when by the Artifices of the Ministry at the Court, the Church Party were made the Tools to carry on an unnatural Persecution against the Dissenters. Remember what I tell you, Doctor, said he, You'll all of you soon be Repent of this Intemperate and unpolitic Usage of your Protestant Brethren. I know what Pretences you have for it, but they are unjust, and weak. Do you think these poor People would Meet in Corners, and that under perpetual apprehensions of being dragg'd to Jail, and turn in piecemeal Proccesses from Doctors Benches? Do ye think they'd sacrifice their Ease, their Liberty, and (as the World goes,) their Reputation too, for the sake of a peevish humour; that mark them out for Suffering, if not for Ruine, unless they were convinced in the Sincerity of their Hearts, that their way of Worship was right? I don't speak of their Teachers; for whatever Interest they may be supposed to cultivate, the People I am sure can have none: If they are in an Error, tis certain, they are mistaken in good earnest: Nay I'm perswaded, that those that are Educated in the worst, and falsest Religions, do heartily believe them to be true. Hence I infer added he, that no Man ought to be insulted upon this score, and the example of so many People, that Err in the simplicity of their Consciences,

ought

ought to inspire us with some tenderness towards those, whom we imagine to be mistaken. Besides that, it is a barbarous Solecism in any State, to force their Natives to seek Refuge in Foreign Countries, because they can't believe all that is Prescrib'd to them, which it is not in a Man's Power to do. I have an Argument, continued he, still behind, which, tho' it may look like a Paradox at first, yet I believe, will bring you over to my Party, when you have considered it; I affirm then, that it is the interest of the Established Clergy, that the Dissenters should be Tolerated; we find into what abominable Disorders the Church of *Rome* fell when she Reigned Lady Paramount, in these Western parts of the World, without any one to oppose her; and what happened to the Church, I may happen to another; for the same Causes produce the same Effects. 'Tis certain, that the Reformers obliged her to Retrench several notorious Abuses, and to them is owing all that improvement in Arts, and Sciences, which the Ecclesiasticks of that Communion have made since. In *France*, and *Germany*, where the Catholics live intermixt with the Protestants, and consequently the Priests have a Thousand Spies upon all their Actions, that they are forced to be vigilant in their own Defence, like People upon a Frontier and to live in some *Alarm*; whereas the quite contrary is to be seen in *Spain*, and *Italy*; there the Clergy live among a parcel of stupid, implicit Blockheads, that take all they say, for Oracles, have no Enemy to remind them of standing upon their Guard, fear no Reproaches, and apprehend no Rivals, so 'tis no wonder if they are as debauched as ignorant. I know, concluded he, 'tis commonly wished, that all People were of one mind in matters of Religion; but in case it were practicable I very much question whether it would be for your Interest, *Dissur*, that it should be so. I am so well acquainted with the infirmities, and weakness of Mankind, that I believe a state of Laziness and Security would be infinitely more prejudicial to the World, than a state of perpetual Discord, though that too is attended with several inconveniencies.

His Conversation was Easy, Pleasant, Familiar, but always inoffensive; it was season'd with that agreeable Salt which gives a life to all Discourse, but had no Bitterness, no Gall mixt with it. He endeavor'd fairly and candidly to convince those that differed from him in their Opinions, but never affected the modern way of Usurping upon their Reason, much less did he pretend to silence them with an *Ipsè Dixit*; and indeed, a Man that tells me my Sentiments are ill grounded and irrational, without condescending to refute them by calm and sober Arguments, calls me Fool or Madman,



man, with only a little more Solemnity: Yet these are the common Civilities in Religious Disputes of most People to one another, who talk much of right Reason, and always mean their own, and make their private imaginations the Standard of General Truth. He never Diverged himself or the Company, at the expence of other People, and next to his own Reputation, which was Sacred to him, he cherish'd and supported that of his Neighbour. He was so far from making the Calamities and Misfortunes of any Man the subject of his Entertainment, though he chanc'd to be never so inveterate an Enemy to him, that were it proper, I could produce instances of several Citizens, that have represented him as an Atheist, and loaded him with the most Injurious, and cruel Reproaches, and yet when either by their own ill Management, or the common vicissitude that attends Human Affairs, they have been reduced to Wants, he has visited them in a most obliging manner, and generously relieved them.

As he was consider'd in the World, as one that had an extraordinary interest in Persons of the most eminent Quality: 'tis no wonder that a perpetual Application was made to him, and that his Gates were crowded by Supplicants of all sorts. If any favour was asked him, he was slow to promise, as diffident what success he might meet with in the affair, or unwilling to be too troublesome to his Friends; but when he had once engaged his Word to any one, nothing could be so Assiduous, so Indefatigable, and if I may be allow'd the expression, nothing so importunate. He was naturally Master of a very persuasive Talent of Speaking, and cou'd deliver himself Properly, and Pertinently, upon any Occasion: But tho' his Modesty wou'd never permit him to be a good Solicitor for himself, yet when he undertook to Prosecute the Rights of the Oppressed, when he appear'd in behalf of indigent Widows and Orphans, he exerted himself with unusual Vigour and Force, and seldom fail'd of gaining his Point. That Honourable Character, which *Cornelius Nepos*, bestows upon *Pomponius Atticus*, viz. That when he espous'd any Friend's Cause, he pursued it with so much generous Zeal and Warmth, *Ut non manducanti sed famam rem agere videretur*, seems to have been revived in him: He never paid the less respect to Virtue, for being Unfortunate; on the other hand, he took a Noble Pride in relieving and assisting the Afflicted; even those that were betrayed to Poverty by their own Extravagancies or Indiscretions, participat'd some share of his Charity, but always of his pious Advice, which he thought would make a deeper impression upon the party, and be better regarded, when it came ac-

accompanied with some Benevolence. To justify this Assertion, you know, Sir, I am able to cite abundance of singular Examples, if there were occasion for it, but having tied my self to give only a general Character of our Friend, I cannot, nor is it necessary, to descend to particulars.

Tho', as I have already Observed, his Charity was of so extended a Character, that it reach'd to Persons of all Communions, and Perswasions, yet he cou'd never think of Popery, without the utmost Horror and Detestation; and, indeed, I never in all my Life, heard him mention it, all Candour and Gentleness as he was, without a visible Emotion and Resentment. He said, he cou'd forgive their Priests, for affecting a Dominion over the People, and making a Penny of their Credulity; that this was natural enough, and might easily be accounted for, Ambition and Covetousness, being two Vices that have their Spring from within; of which Ecclesiasticks are as well capable, as the Laity; but then he added, that he cou'd never be reconciled to their inhumane Cruelty, in persecuting all that dissented from them, and to that no less absurd, than abominable Idolatry and Polytheism, which was so notoriously visible in their Worship.

As to the former, he us'd to say, that it argued so Cowardly, so Pusillanimous a Spirit, that it betrayed so violent a distrust of the Merits of the Cause, that it so directly combar'd all the principles of our Holy Religion, and indeed, all the common impressions of Humanity, that where ever he found any Church abandoning it self to such Black and execrable Methods, for his part he was fatished it had arrived to the highest pitch of Corruption, and would look no farther: That such a procedure might be somewhat excusable in the *Mahometan* Religion, which like a Neighbouring Prince, was Born with Teeth and Nails, cou'd Scratch and Bite in the Cradle, and fire Towns, and cut Throats before it was a Twelve Month Old; whose Instructor was a Bloody Merciless Wretch, bred up in the Trade of Rapine and Plunder, a Monster compounded of Enthusiasm, Lust, and Cruelty, who left it as the only Legacy to his Followers, to propagate their Belief by the Sword; so this, he said, if it cou'd not be justified, yet no better cou'd be expected from these barbarous Professing-Masters, who punctually proved their Master's Will, and took out Letters of Administration for him. But, that Christianity shou'd be made the occasion, at least the pretence, of all that Blood-shed and Desolation, which has been acted in the *Western* World for several Ages; that the Professors of it, whom formerly their Enemies cou'd



could not but admire for the sweetness of their Disposition, their Mutual Love, forbearance and condescension towards one another, should now set up for Cannibals, and prey upon their own kind, nay, to inflame their reckoning, should have the impudence to pretend a Commission from their Master for doing all this, was the most unaccountable Prodigy in the world to him, and which (to our disgrace, be it spoken) could not be matched in all the Annals of Paganism. Even among the *Druids*, the highest Punishment they inflicted upon Offenders, was to prohibit them from assisting at any of their Sacred Rites.

*\* Siquis aut privatus aut publicus eorum decreto non fuerit, sacrificiis interdicunt, hac poena apud eos est gravissima.* \* *Cesar de Bell. Gall. l. 6.*

If the modern Priesthood would sit down content with this discipline of their Predecessors, the *Druids*, (who were none of the mercifullest of their Cloath) and proceed no farther with their Delinquents, the Laity would have no great occasion to complain of them, for as the World has been since brought about, the Thunder of the Church is now degenerated into a Squib, and where it is not enforced by the secular Arm, carries no mighty Terror with it. The Gentlemen of the Black-Robe, will perhaps say, that this is wicked Doctrine, but I wonder where the Impiety lies, to affirm that the Devil is not so much in the Clergy's Interell, as to obey their Summons, as often as upon every Trifle, he is served with a Subpœna from an Ecclesiastical Court.

As for the latter, I mean the charge of Polytheism and Idolatry, which he said was so fully proved upon them, by that most admirable Man, the present Bishop of *Worcester*, he lamented it as an unfurmounable Obstacle to the Conversion, both of the *Jews* and *Mahometans*. The Doctors of the *Roman Church* indeed by their subtle Distinctions of two Greek Words, endeavour to mince the matter, but after all their pains to wash the Blackamoor, Idolatry is no better nor worse than Idolatry, and will be so to the end of the Chapter. If we look into their Rituals, and judge of their Belief by their Practice, we shall find that they pay to a whole Almanack full of Saints of their own making, the same Ceremonies, in the very same words, accompanied with the same Prostrations, as they do to God Almighty. They directly offer their Prayers, make Vows, and Consecrate Temples to them, nay, what is more, (for Superstition

pestifition has no Bounds) they offer our Blessed Lord and Saviour to them, and yet they think to come off with their *Terminative and Relative*. These new made Free-men of the Calendar, are Worshipt from *Lapland* to *Japan*, are invoked in a thousand places at once, and the *Beatific Looking-Glass* must solve all this, the Dream of some idle Sot of a Schoolman, without the least warrant from Scripture or Reason. They pretend good manners for this, and tell us that God Almighty must not be rudely approached, but that the Petition must be delivered in by some Favourite. I wonder that these Gentlemen, that Pray thus by Proxy, shou'd not manage every thing else after this wise rate, and when they are to take Physick, that they don't employ a Friend to take the Dose of Pills, or Electuary in their stead.

He was for a plain intelligible Theology, such as our Saviour and the Apostles left it behind them, and such as it continued for some time, till the *Jewish* and *Græcian* Converts, but especially the Philosophers, for different ends Debauch'd it with Ceremonies, and Muffled it up in Mystery. And since Religion was Calculated for reasonable Creatures, he thought, that Conviction and not Authority ought to influence Mankind; for this Reason, he looked upon those Men to have no small share of Vanity, Laziness, or Weakness in their Composition, that suffer themselves tamely to be imposed upon by magnificent Sounds, and numerous Citations. *Plutarch* in *Solan's* Life, tell us, That that famous Legislator inserted a Verse into *Homer*, to prove, That the Island of *Salamis* belonged of right to the *Athenians*; and who knows, what strange Interpolations have been made in the Ecclesiastical Monuments by Men, that valued the Interest of their Party, more than the Truth; especially, if we consider, that before the invention of Printing, few Copies of Books cou'd be Published at a time, and those fell into few hands, and might easily be suppress'd or corrupted; to which Temptation, I cou'd heartily wish, those we call the purest Ages of the Church, had never been exposed. An unintelligible, or absurd Proposition, is to be never the more respected for its having travel'd far, or wearing the Venerable Badge of Antiquity. That former Ages were so prodigiously cautious and honest, as neither to be imposed upon themselves, nor suffer any Errors to be transmitted to their

Poste-

Posterity, is a Metaphysical Contemplation, with which superstitious People may amuse or delight themselves in their Closets, but is never to be urged to such Persons, that have examined these matters with more impartiality and care.

This naturally leads me to that part of his Character, which I confess, I would conceal from the rest of the World, if it lay in my Power, as it does not, since it is no Secret to those that knew him; but as I have pretended to give an impartial Account of our Friend, I find my self obliged to take some notice of it before I conclude. He was then (and I wish once more I cou'd conceal it) he was not so Orthodox, as I cou'd have wished he had been, in his Opinion about the Holy Trinity, and the satisfaction of our Saviour, according to the common Explications. I don't pretend in the least to Vindicate him in either, only give me leave to add; that as few Men in the World have been without their Errors, (I cou'd instance, if I pleas'd, in some of the best and learnedest Fathers of the Church) so I think a charitable Construction ought to be given of them, where the Person mistaking, was of no Obstinate, refractory Temper, but shou'd in the whole Tenour of his Life, that he aim'd at nothing more than to find out the Truth; so that if he mist it in the pursuit, it should only be ascribed to humane Imbecillity, from which the greatest Men are not exempt. It ought to be consider'd too, that when he first appear'd in the World, he found the Nation involved in a Bloody Civil War, and the Church divided by several Schisms, as the state was distracted by different Factions. The Laity at that time looked upon themselves to be ill used by the Leaders of both Churches, who did not seem to contend for the purity of Religion, so much as they did who should have the Rod in their hands, to jerk the poor People that were under their Power, and as it is natural for Men to run out of one extreame into another, they imagin'd a cheat put upon them, even where there was no reason to suspect one. He was naturally inquisitive, and devoted as much time to Reading, as a life so taken up as his, but generally employ'd in the service of others, would well permit. He had observed how inconsistent with themselves, and how different from us, the Fathers of the Church were before the Nicene

Nicene Council, in their Explications of the Trinity, which extorted this Confession from the Learned \* Gro-

\* Epist. ad Fratrem 152 *tius; Constat mihi Patres in explicatione harum rerum plurimum dissensisse, etiam si vocum quorundam sono inter se conveniant.* That to give an instance or two of their

† Edit. Oxon. strange confusion or unfairness, † Theophilus, Anti-ocheus, speaking of the *Abys*, or the second Person of the Trinity, calls him the *Primum Ort*, or Holy Ghost, which *καταρχη οὗ τοῦ ἁγίου* descended upon the

† Simil. V. Prophets; that † Hermas a Writer in the Apostolical Times, uses the word *Spiritus Sanctus*, in the same sense with *Mens Humano*; that St. Barnabas,

or some body under his Name, Cap. 12. quotes *Isaias*, for *ἀντιπαραστήσει μοι χριστὸν ὡς υἱόν*, *Christo meo Domino*, instead of *ἐκδο* *Cyro*, as the LXX, and we have rightly Translated it; that it is often difficult to know whether a word is to be taken in the figurative or proper sense, as the Word *Elohim*, so much used in this controversy among the *Jews*, in its primary meaning, signifies the Supreme and only God, but that it is frequently applied in Holy Writ to Angels and Princes; that as for the famous passage in St.

\* See Dr. John, Cap. 5. v. 7, 8. which our Bibles, after the *Hebrew's* Tra- \* Manuscripts of a more modern date, read thus

vels; Let. 1st. *There are three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are One, and there are three that bear Witness in Earth, the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood, and these three agree in one.* The *Alexandrine* Manuscript has only these Words, *There are three that bear Witness, the Spirit, &c.* so have all the Ancient Greek Copies, as also the *Syriac*, the *Arabic*, the *Ethiopic*, and Latin Interpreters in the oldest Manuscripts; that if the Words, according as we find them in our Editions, are extant in any of the Ancient Books, they are Written in the Margin, and not in the Text, and generally in a later Hand: That as several learned Annotators have observed, 'tis plain that many of the Fathers did not read the above mentioned Passage about the Witnesses in Heaven, as now we do, because they never make use of it in their Disputes with the *Arians*, although they cite

\* Orat. 36. the other about the Witnesses in Earth, as is evident from the case of \* *Gregory Nazianzen*; that tho' in answer to this, it may be objected, that St. *Cyprian* read this passage

in our Bibles now have it, because in his Book *de Unitate Ecclesie* he has these Words, *De Patre, & Filio, & Spiritu Sancto* first, &c. — In the same place, yet in the same, in his Critical History of the New Testament, v. 18. has well observed; it is not probable St. Cyrian read the Words so, and yet St. Austin should never employ them against the *Arians* of his Time; and therefore that learned Orick, not without good grounds, supposes that St. Cyrian adapted the Words of the 8th. Verse, *Et in Spiritum sanctum* (for so the Vulgar Latin reads it,) to the Father, Son, and holy Ghost; and tis certain that St. Cyrian frequently cites several Passages out of the Bible, with the same assurance as if he had cited the very express Words: That however it came about, the same variety of Reading is to be found in several other Texts; as for example, the third Verse in the first Epistle of St. John, v. 4. which the Greek Copies, as likewise the Syriac, and these Words included in the Peshito Version read with us, Every Spirit thus confesses our Lord Jesus (Christ is come in the Flesh) is not of God; the Vulgar Translation, as also Irenaeus, l. 3. c. 18. Tertullian, l. 5. contra Marcionem, v. 18. and Socrates, l. 7. Hist. Eccles. c. 52. read it *Omne Spiritum qui gloriatur Jesum, ex Deo non est*: That thus in the fourth Verse of St. John, the Word God is not in the *Alexandrine* MS. nor in two of *Beza*, nor in five others mention'd in the *Oxford* Edition, nor in the Latin Interpreter: That in the Epistle to the *Romans*, v. 9. v. 5. Christ is called God blessed for ever, whereas St. Cyrian, l. 2. adversus Judaeos, and Hilary upon the Second Psalm omit the Word *Deus*, and St. Chrysostom seems to have read it so: That likewise in the first Epistle to Timothy, c. 3. v. 16. where we read it God made manifest in the Flesh, the same Word is left out in the Latin and Syriac Version, which Lesson is confirm'd by the *Clermont* MS. and by another cited in the *Oxford* Edition, upon which Place Erasmus supposes it to have been added by the Orthodox to stop the mouths of the *Arians*: but *Beza*, that it was designedly omitted by those that denied the Divinity of our Blessed Saviour: That thus in 2d. Cor. 20. v. 18. where our Bibles read it in the Church of God, the *Alex.* the *Greek* and Latin Interpreters, and three Ox-



And 1855. read it *in* *supra* of the Lord; others in the same sense *supra*, as *Deo*, the *Latin* following the latter, the *Syriac* the former reading, and this being one of those places which the *Nestorians* and *Eutyrians* made use of in their Controversies, it is not so much to be ascribed to the negligence of the Copier, as to the Design of

\*I will trouble the Reader with one Instance of this, tho it does not relate to the present Dispute, to shew how much directed a Part some People would take to bech decide in their Opinions. In the Epistle to the *Romans*, c. 5. v. 14. St Paul says that *Death* reigned from *Adam* to *Nos*, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of *Adam's* Transgression. *Origen* has observed that the Particle *not* was wanting in many Copies; and *Hilary* the Deacon prefers this Reading. Yet in this, and the last Age, what ill natur'd Warr have the Divines rais'd about it; tho at this distance 'tis impossible to tell which was the genuine Edition.

which others call'd *Person*; and, on the other hand, *Nestorius* meant that by the Word *Person*, which others did by *Nature*; the whole *Eastern* World was set on a Flame by those People who, as far as we can guess by their Writings at this Interval of Time, meant the very same thing; That St. *Augustin* himself, in his Book, *De Trin.* c. 9. where he would persuade the Reader that the thing, tho incomprehensible, may be understood, fairly owns that nothing is said all this while by the Words they use, *Diffini est tamen tres personas, non ut ali- quid dicatur, sed ut cognoscatur*. That the Citations, which *Augustin*, and others, bring out of the *Latin* Authors to prove the



the belief of this Mystery amongst all People, seem to be as  
 suspicious as the Testimonies alleged by  
*Galatians* a Ministry of the Church of Rome, *De Arcanis Cabal*  
 out of *Rabbi Cithana*, *Rabbi Gula*, and *Rabbi Simon*, and lately by that Tur-  
 coast of Putney Mr. Salazar, to prove the monstrous Doctrine  
 of Transubstantiation; or if they are true they may probably  
 be supposed to be borrowed out of *Plato's* Writings, with which  
 'tis certain the *Jews* from the time of the *Exodus* and *Solomons*  
 were not unacquainted: That what has been urg'd of the Nati-  
 ons most renown'd for Antiquity, and deep Speculation, that  
 they fell upon the same Doctrine of a Trinity of *Hypostasis* in  
 one Divine Essence, either comes not up to the matter in hand, as  
 what is said of the *Deity* of *Origen*  
*Porphyry*, who, as *Pletharchus* affirms, believ'd  
 good and a bad Being, together with one of a middle Na-  
 ture; or else is utterly false, as what has been pretended  
 out of *Porphyry* and *Justinian* of the old *Egyptians*.  
 That long before the Coming of our Saviour  
*Blasius* asserted three Principles, the first of which he calls to be the Cause of all things,  
 the second to be the Word and Govern-  
 ant of things present and to come; the third, the Soul arbitress of the World; and that he held the second  
 Principle to be begotten or created by the first, and the third  
 by the second: That 'tis a Matter of great difficulty to know  
 whether he understood the Word *Logos* in the same sense as  
*Plato* did the *Dikephos* and not so; if we affirm he did, it makes  
 for the *Christian* Cause; if we deny it, 'tis certain that some  
 things lay under the same Hypothesis, which creates a great  
 deal of wonderment: That 'tis doubtful whether the Ancients  
 when they say that the *Hypostasis* of the *Son* was *Eternal*, or  
*eternal*, meant that it was without any beginning, as that of the  
*Father* which was begotten in time; or whether they call'd it to be  
 eternal was before the World: That *Plato*  
 responds to be of the latter Opinion  
 when he says, that the *Son* was not always  
 and that he was not without a beginning, and

that several of the *Aqui-Nicene* Fathers intimate, That the son was begotten a little before the World; tho' they expressly call him *eternus*: That the Primitive Christians, who had been *Platonists* before their Conversion, endeavour'd to accommodate the Notions of *Plato* to those of the Bible; as we find the *Western* People afterwards play'd the same Tricks with *Aristotle*; and the *Catholics* now a-days are not wanting to interpret the Apostles, out of *Carnelius*. That the *Nicene* Council, which those whose interest it is to admire these Assemblies, set out in such magnificent Terms, was principally compos'd of a pack of wrangling, contentions *Grecians*, Men bred up in Controversie all their Life, and perpetually quarrelling with one another, and a few ignorant, simple, credulous Divines out of the *West*; but not a jot better than the former; who, after a World of foolish, shameful squabbling between themselves, were brought to Bed at last of a set of obscure Articles, couched under none of the most intelligible Terms, which the stupid People were to receive with the same Veneration, as if they had drop'd down from Heaven: That there were such visible adulterations of the Works of the Primitive Authors, of which *Ignatius's* Epistles will be a lasting Instance, and the Trade of the *Pis-Framers*, for universally carried on in the first and best Age, of which the *Sybilline* Oracles are Testimonies sufficient, that it was not safe to depend too much upon any Authority: That lastly, as our Salvation is entirely depended upon the Belief of this Doctrine, which gives so great a shock to unassisted Natural Reason; and seems highly agreeable to the Justice and Wisdom of God, that he wou'd have deliver'd it in plainest and most express Terms; since now both Parties pretend to justify themselves equally out of the Bible; and (to Instance in no other Passage) the *Arians* as well as *Homocites*, support their Hypothesis out of *St. Paul's* *apostolus* *ad* *hebr.* *capitulum* *ix.* *versus* *13.* *et* *14.* *et* *15.* *et* *16.* *et* *17.* *et* *18.* *et* *19.* *et* *20.* *et* *21.* *et* *22.* *et* *23.* *et* *24.* *et* *25.* *et* *26.* *et* *27.* *et* *28.* *et* *29.* *et* *30.* *et* *31.* *et* *32.* *et* *33.* *et* *34.* *et* *35.* *et* *36.* *et* *37.* *et* *38.* *et* *39.* *et* *40.* *et* *41.* *et* *42.* *et* *43.* *et* *44.* *et* *45.* *et* *46.* *et* *47.* *et* *48.* *et* *49.* *et* *50.* *et* *51.* *et* *52.* *et* *53.* 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*et* *141.* *et* *142.* *et* *143.* *et* *144.* *et* *145.* *et* *146.* *et* *147.* *et* *148.* *et* *149.* *et* *150.* *et* *151.* *et* *152.* *et* *153.* *et* *154.* *et* *155.* *et* *156.* *et* *157.* *et* *158.* *et* *159.* *et* *160.* *et* *161.* *et* *162.* *et* *163.* *et* *164.* *et* *165.* *et* *166.* *et* *167.* *et* *168.* *et* *169.* *et* *170.* *et* *171.* *et* *172.* *et* *173.* *et* *174.* *et* *175.* *et* *176.* *et* *177.* *et* *178.* *et* *179.* *et* *180.* *et* *181.* *et* *182.* *et* *183.* *et* *184.* *et* *185.* *et* *186.* *et* *187.* *et* *188.* *et* *189.* *et* *190.* *et* *191.* *et* *192.* *et* *193.* *et* *194.* *et* *195.* *et* *196.* *et* *197.* *et* *198.* *et* *199.* *et* *200.* *et* *201.* *et* *202.* *et* *203.* *et* *204.* *et* *205.* *et* *206.* *et* *207.* *et* *208.* *et* *209.* *et* *210.* *et* *211.* *et* *212.* *et* *213.* *et* *214.* *et* *215.* *et* *216.* *et* *217.* *et* *218.* *et* *219.* *et* *220.* *et* *221.* *et* *222.* *et* *223.* *et* 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ting them down; for tho' they appear'd convincing and satisfactory to him, or at least kept him from pronouncing *Anathema's* against those that cou'd not come up to the Rigours of the *Quicumque vult*, they may carry no great weight with any one else. For my part, I who have known the World long enough to entertain no very honourable Notion of Synods and Councils, where Men of Design, and such there will always be, carry'd with them the same Passions and Animosities, that we now behold in our Senates and Civil Assemblies, without their Decision take the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity upon Content, such as I find it in the New Testament, and never trouble my Head about the *Modo* or different Explications with which the *Scholæ disputandi* has (to give it no worse a word) so long amur'd the Christian World. Had these pack'd, and as they were manag'd, useless Meetings of the Prelates (for I am of a late Grammarians Mind *Gastor Scioppius*, who not unjustly defin'd the Representative Church to be *Mandra, seu grex jumentorum, seu asinarum*) instead of busying their Thoughts about Creed-making, employ'd the Authority they usurp'd, to promote the real practice of Christianity, it had been much happier for themselves, and for us, that succeed them.

I have the less to say to the latter Point, I mean the satisfaction of our Blessed Saviour, because our Friend was reconcil'd to the Term, in the moderate sense of well-pleasedness long before his Death, which, to the Grief of all that knew him, and the loss of his Country in general, happen'd on the 20th. of this instant December, after two Days Sickness. He wou'd indeed often argue, how a vicarious Punishment cou'd possibly consist with the Divine Justice or Mercy; and how any Redemption cou'd be necessary to atone for Adam's Transgression, whom Millions had never heard of, and no one had ever commission'd to transact for him. As for Sacrifices, about which 'tis left to every Man's liberty to think as he pleases, since it is no Article of our Faith, he cou'd never be induced to believe them to be of Divine Institution; but being used by all the Neighbouring Nations, to have been indulg'd the Jews (as the

the Kingly Government was afterwards) upon the account of their stubborn obstinate Temper, which was much delighted with Pomp and Shew. In this particular, he has several of the most Learned Men of this Age concurring with him; and if I may be allow'd to interpose my own Opinion, I think Dr. *Spencer*, and Monsieur *Le Clark* have put it beyond any manner of Dispute, that not only Sacrifices (which, but especially those of the Expiatory kind, seem to have been invented by a Superstitious or designing Priesthood) but most of the other Rites and Ceremonies that we meet with in the Jewish Oeconomy, were practis'd first by their Neighbours; and after they were purged of their Idolatrous dross, tolerated in that stiff-necked People.

The Pagans had a gross Notion, that their Gods, whom they looked upon to be little better than Corporeal, were pleased with the Nidors of their Victims.

And now, Sir, I am arriv'd to the Conclusion of this tedious Letter, which if it does not wholly answer Mr. *Firmin's* Character, I hope you'll impute it to the hurry and disorder I was in at the time of writing it. I wish you had imposed your Commands upon some abler Person, whose manner of managing the Subject, might have born some proportion to the Dignity of it. For to say the Truth, Mr. *Firmin* was a most excellent Member of our Commonwealth, who bent all his Studies, Labours, and Inclinations to serve and advance the Publick Good. He had his Infirmities as has been shewn, but they ought never to be remembered to his prejudice, since he had so many Vertues of the first magnitude to over-balance them. But it never to fail, that he who treated all Mankind, with universal Charity, when alive, should not be treated with the same Charity himself now he is in the Grave.

London, Dec. 29.

S. J. R.

Your Humble Servant.

